Docket No.: 02309/000I158-US0

REMARKS

Pending claims

Claims 1-15 are pending. Claims 12-15 have been canceled. No new matter has been added. Independent claims 1 and 8-10 have been amended to more clearly claim what the inventor regards as the invention. Amendments are supported by the specification and the drawings. For example, see Figs. 4A-4C. No new matter has been added.

Because Claims 12-15 have been canceled, the rejections against these claims have been rendered moot.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §102

Claims 1-4 and 6-11 have been rejected unde 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Ehrnsperger et al. (USP 6,160,200).

Ehrnsperger et al. does not disclose, teach, or suggest the invention as set forth in independent claims 1 and 8-10.

For example, claim 1 states:

Claim 1 (currently amended): An absorbent article comprising: a main body including a liquid-pervious top sheet, a back sheet and an absorbent core sandwiched between said top sheet and said back sheet;

a skin-protective ingredient containing layer applied in a stripe, dot, or lattice pattern on one surface of said top sheet on a side mating with skin of a wearer such that the skin-protective ingredient is released from said one surface of said top sheet to form an oily film on skin of the wearer while contacting the skin of the wearer; and

a support layer formed over said skin-protective ingredient containing layer for retaining said skin-protective ingredient on said one surface of said top sheet and isolating said skin-protective ingredient containing layer from skin of the wearer, said support layer being soluble in water:

at a temperature higher than or equal to 25°C, solving in water of

Reply to Office Action of August 26, 2005

said support layer being promoted, and/or at a relative humidity of at least 30%, absorbing of moisture or solving in water of said support layer being promoted for exposing said skin-protective ingredient containing layer to skin of the wearer for permitting transfer of said skin-protective ingredient to skin of the wearer.

Docket No.: 02309/000I158-US0

At least the above bolded feature in claim 1 and similarly in other independent claims are not disclosed, taught, or suggested by the cited prior art reference. For at least this reason, claims 1 and 8-10 are not anticipated by Ehrnsperger.

Furthermore, claims 2-4, 6, 7, and 11 are not anticipated by the cited prior art reference for at least the same reason as their base claims.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §103

Claims 4 and 5 have been rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ehrnsperger et al. as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Roe et al.

Neither Ehrnsperger nor Roe discloses, teaches, or suggests at least the bolded feature as shown above. Particularly, neither of the references discloses a skin-protective ingredient containing layer applied in a stripe, dot, or lattice pattern on one surface of said top sheet as set forth in claim 1. Therefore, claims 4 and 5 which depend from claim 1 indirectly are not obvious from the cited prior references.

Application No. 09/761,511 Amendment dated December 22, 2005 Reply to Office Action of August 26, 2005 Docket No.: 02309/000I158-US0

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Dated: December 22, 2005

Respectfully submitted

Chris T. Mizumoto

Registration No.: 42,899 DARBY & DARBY P.C.

P.O. Box 5257

New York, New York 10150-5257

(212) 527-7700

(212) 527-7701 (Fax)

Attorneys/Agents For Applicant